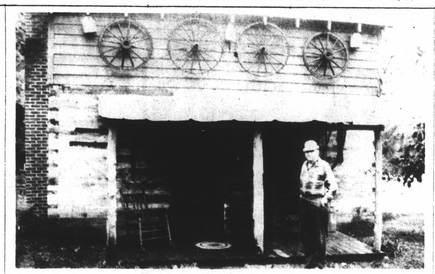
THEN & NOW!

Part 11 "A Log Cabin THEN, A Log Cabin NOW"



Bill Conner and his cabin - NOW

As he stood just a few feet from the door of the three-room log cabin he had just completed, Wellington Henry (Bill) Conner thought to himself, "I see it, but I can hardly believe it." He will be 73 years of age in June of 1978 and in all of those long years he couldn't remember having experienced such a feeling as he had now.

It wasn't just a feeling of accomplishment, though that was a part of it; not even the feeling of satisfaction with a job well done. It was all of this and more.

Looking at the cabin that he had just completed, so very much like the one in which he was born on the Appomattox River, Bill felt as though he was a child again, remembering all of the happy times in that first log cabin.

"Hard work" said Bill Conner, "is my secret for keeping young." Since his retirement he certainly has done his share of hard work and maybe that is why he doesn't look his age. He was able to do most of the work for the log cabin by notching the logs and laying them in place himself.

Stepping inside the cabin, Bill's eyes were drawn to the old shot gun that was over a hundred years old. It reminded him of the time he went turkey hunting when he had whopping cough. He began accompanying his father when he was only 7 years of age and began carrying his own gun at age 14.

On this particular occasion he was sitting in a turkey blind and he couldn't keep from coughing. In fact, he coughed so much he frightened the turkeys away. Finally he was sent to the house to recouperate!

Taking a seat in the old fashioned rocker in front of the fireplace, Bill Conner relaxed. As he gazed into the fire he remembered - - -

Many an afternoon he would come home from school, whether it was Harmony School, Hollywood School, Rugby School at Vera, or maybe even grade school in Appomattox, and warm his hands in front of the open fire before beginning his chores for the day. Bill remembered playing hooky on numerous occasions, but somehow the teacher never did much about it! Laughing to himself, he thought, "I wouldn't get away with that today!"

Bill remembered studying music under the direction of "Punch" Johnson who taught singing in the counties of Charlotte and Appomattox. Bill loved singing then and he still does.

As he sat there thinking back over the years, he remembered the new car he bought in 1926; he paid all of $451.00 for it! He and George Abbitt had dates with two Appomattox County girls; (one still lives in Appomattox, the other in Farmville). The boys were planning to drive the girls back to State Teachers College in Farmville (now Longwood College). It had been raining really hard and one of the girls lived near a creek; the rains had caused the creek to rise. When Bill attempted to drive through the rain swollen stream, water got in the engine of the car and they were in for a bit of trouble! Just when they were trying to impress the girls, too. I failed to asked how the girls made it back to school!

"Enough of this looking back" said Bill to himself, as he got up and went into the kitchen, but what else could he do for the kitchen was almost an exact replica of his mother's kitchen.

In the corner is a flour barrel and a bread tray with a cloth laying over it just as his mother had hers. He remembers his mother using a barrel of flour (196 lbs.) every three weeks to feed the family of eleven.

Going over to a table under the window he got a drink of water form the water bucket using a gourd dipper - - - it tasted so good! Then he washed his hands in the little round washpan with some home-made soap. (The homemade soap was made for him by Mrs. Guy Smith. As he busied himself about the kitchen of his cabin he got an idea. He kindled a fire in the black iron stove and made his decision. What this cabin needed to make it just like his Mother's kitchen was the small of food cooking. Quickly he planned his menu, Fat back, corn bread, and a pot of beans. (Although he was not cooking the day I visited, he does often and also cooks the holiday turkeys and hams on the wood stove in the cabin.)

As his meal cooked, Bill Conner looked around the room at the many antiques he had hanging on the wall and on shelves. Some were handed down, some he had bought, and some were gifts.

On a shelf was a jar of gold dust; his wife's father had worked for a dentist and he kept the "sweepings" off the floor when the dentist had been using gold to fill a patient's tooth.

On the wall is a single and double ox yoke made of wood, a sterling silver shoe buttoner, old household appliances and tools. This was a peculiar looking device that was used to give medication to a horse whenever needed.

As he looked at the cast iron hair curler he thought of the pain that might be inflicted on the lady attempting to use them. It was necessary for her to put the curling iron in the top of an oil lamp until it reached the desired heat as it would curl hair, then they carefully put a strand of hair between two pieces of the curling iron and held it in place until just the right amount of curl was formed. I can't quite figure out how kept a steady hand with that heavy contraption so as not to burn their ears!

As Bill Conner browsed around his kitchen he thought of the day in 1966 when he began building his cabin. He became so very enthused with the idea that he finished much sooner than anticipated - - - June 1967. Now all he had to do was enjoy it!

Bill Conner does enjoy his cabin and so does his wife, Verna; the day I visited with them she was busily crocheting a rug as we talked. The cabin is also a gathering place for his many friends who love to hunt. As they gather around the fireplace, they talk over the game they brought in and even the ones that got away, too!

With visitors coming from far and near to visit Bill's cabin, it takes up a great deal of his time and he enjoys it. Still, he finds time for other interests. He gardens every summer, producing enough for the table and to fill the freezer. It is a good thing that the hunting season doesn't come when it is gardening time. If that were true, I have a feeling that the gardening would go sadly lacking; how about that Bill?

If you haven't paid a visit to Bill's cabin, you have missed a treat. To enter is to transplanted to another time, and another place and another way of life.

Bill, enjoy your hobby, and as you develop it further, remember the valuable contribution you are making in helping us preserve our precious heritage. After looking at your cabin with all of the valuable antiques showing how people lived THEN, we can truthfully say, "We've come a long way baby!!"

Thanks Bill and Verna for sharing your interests with our readers. We appreciate it more than you know!

Eating Well

The taking of vitamins in excess of accepted recommended allowances is practiced by some athletes. At present there are no valid data to show that excessive intake of vitamins will produce better athletic performance. Some vitamins cause toxic reactions when taken in large enough quantities. In fact, in 1971 vitamin supplements were listed as being the second largest cause of accidental poisoning of children.

Some of the vitamins taken by athletes in excess of the recommended amounts include: vitamins A, C, and the B-complex vitamins. For vitamin A, the margin of safety is small. The body does not excrete excess amounts of the vitamin, and any amount above the daily need is stored. The recommended daily allowance is 5,000 Internaitonal Units per day, whereas toxic reactions have been produced at levels of 18,500 International Units per day. Vitamin C is necessary to make the "cementing" substance that helps to hold the body cells together, and which also aids in the formation of scar tissue. There is no evidence supporting the theory that it will prevent or minimize injuries. In some individuals, large intakes of vitamin C have found to produce allergic reactions. Research data suggest that when vitamin C supplements are taken in excess the body reacts by setting up machinery to destroy the excess. Thereafter, if the intake of vitamin C is dropped to normal levels the continued working of the machinery may bring about a deficiency. In other words, the body may become "hooked" and develop a need for an excess amount.

The B-complex vitamins include vitamin B-12 are necessary in many of the body reactions which make energy available. When the activity level is incrgased the need for these vitamins is also increased. However, researchers have concluded that there is no evidence that athletic performance is improved by additions of supplements.

All people require calories in order to perform their tasks. If each person were to eat a well-balanced diet, he would not need to take protein, vitamin or mineral supplements. Foods provide us with all the necessary nutrients.

BUCKINGHAM RESIDENT ATTENDS SALES MANAGERS' SEMINAR

Robert A. Orange, an accident and health sales representative for Combined Insurance Company of America, recently participated in a Sales Managers' Seminar in Richmond, Va.

Robert Boyajian, Jr., vice-president - sales, said that "Orange was selected to participate in the advanced training program because of his effectiveness and ethical practices in dealing with the public."

Orange resides with his wife Brenda, and two children Vanessa and Kimberly at Star Route, Box 45.

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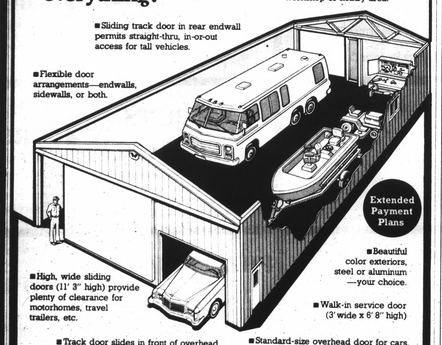
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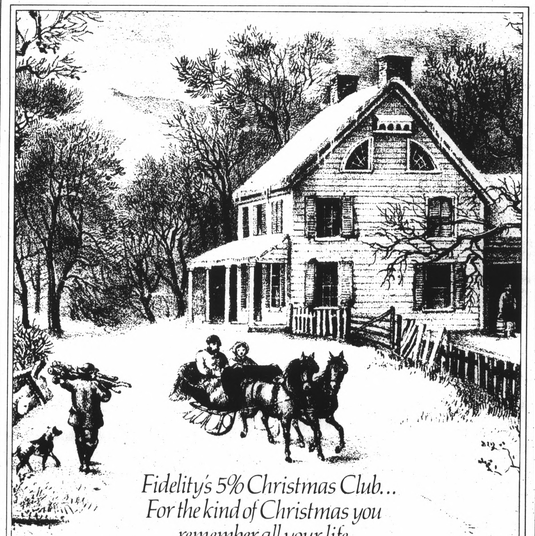

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- The person picking the most games right will be declared the winner. The next best score will win second prize.
- In case of a tie, there will be TWO tie breakers: (1) The closest guess to the actual score of the Appomattox Varsity game . . . (or any other game so designated as a tie breaker.) Be sure to fill in ACTUAL SCORES for these two games!
- Use this ENTIRE PAGE as your entry blank. No other means of entering will be accepted. Be sure to put your name and address in the space provided at the bottom of the page.

Mail page to: FOOTBALL, ©THE TIMES-VIRGINIAN, P.O. Box 665, Appomattox, Va.

- All entries must be received by 12 NOON ON FRIDAY OF EACH WEEK.
- Only one entry per person per week.
- Judges decision will be final.
- Employees of the Times-Virginian and their families are not eligible to enter the contest.

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